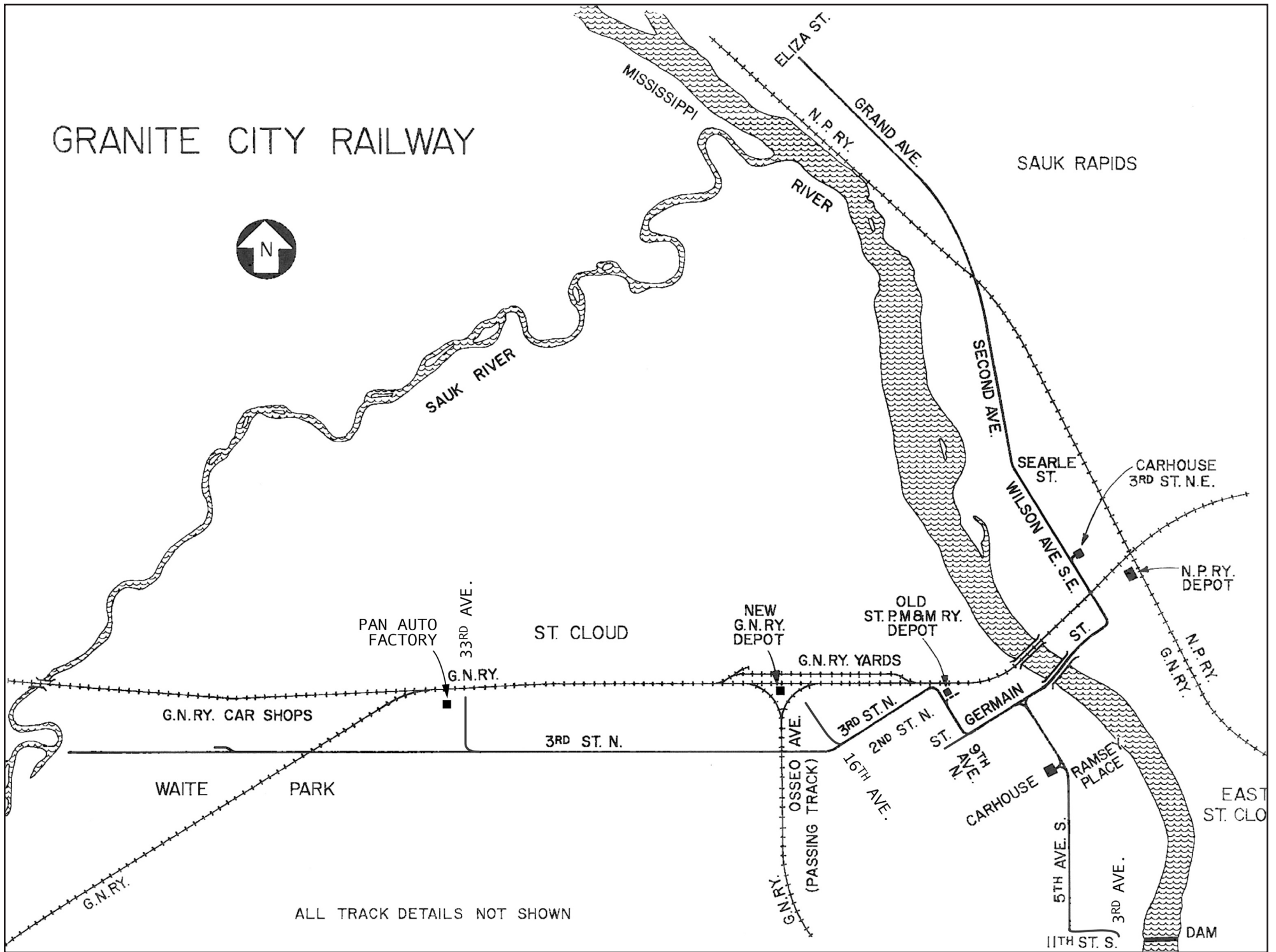


TWIN CITY LINES

Winter 2022



GRANITE CITY RAILWAY



ALL TRACK DETAILS NOT SHOWN

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Streetcars in St. Cloud

-Aaron Isaacs

**All photos from the Stearns
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unless noted**

St. Cloud's streetcar system was unusual because it served three cities in Stearns and Benton counties, including some running through open country. In most ways a typical small city system, it was always fragile financially and went through multiple receiverships and owners. As of 1900, the metro area barely exceeded 10,000 people, which appears to be the minimum to support a streetcar system. The population doubled by the 1920s.

Early records indicate that two separate corporations were formed in March 1883: the St. Cloud Street Railway and the Sauk Rapids Railroad. No construction was undertaken by either company.

The St. Cloud City Street Car Company constructed the first horse car line in St. Cloud during 1887. Work began on the first part of the line on September 10, 1887. W. H. Hewitt of Superior, Wisconsin, had the contract for the construction and equipping of the line. With 60 men working, on October 3 work was completed.

The line ran on 5th Ave. S. from 11th St. S. to St. Germain St., on St. Germain to 9th Ave. N., then north two blocks and east one block to the Great Northern Ry. passenger depot. All single track with 30 lb. flat rail, the line opened October 3, 1887. Forty minutes were required to make the trip from the south end to the railway station. Service started at 6:00 am, ended at



The only known photo of a St. Cloud horse car, probably on 5th Avenue S.

10:00 pm and ran every 20 minutes. Only one car was used for the first five days because of a delay in shipment of the company's horses. When they finally arrived, the total equipment consisted of two cars and eight horses.

The 1890 U. S. Census reported 1.6 miles of 4 foot 2 inch gauge track, 2 horse cars and 10 horses. During the summer of 1891 negotiations were in progress with the objective of selling the company to outsiders who would electrify it and extend it to Sauk Rapids and the Great Northern Railway car shops at Waite Park.

The company was sold September 8, 1891, to Howard Levis, St. Paul, Vice-President and Treasurer of the Northwest Thomson-Houston Electric Co., soon to become part of General Electric. The company was reorgan-

ized October 1, 1891 with H.M. Byllesby was President. Note that name, because it would reappear later.

Building out the streetcar system

Ordinance Number 111, passed on August 20, 1891, gave the new company the permission it needed to switch to electric power. Track was relaid to standard gauge (4 foot 8 1/2 inches) with new and heavier rails. The south end of the 5th Avenue S. line was extended east on 11th Street to 3rd Avenue, bringing it close to the Mississippi River dam with its attendant industries. All went well until the first big blizzard struck. The electric streetcars could not handle the big drifts, requiring horses to be used for a few days.

The city donated right-of-way on

Front cover: This issue covers the streetcars of St. Cloud, Sauk Rapids and Waite Park, which certainly sported the largest destination signs in the state. Having just crossed the Mississippi River, this Sauk Rapids car is turning from St. Germain Street onto Wilson Avenue. Stearns County Historical Society collection.



The corner of 5th Avenue and St. Germain Street was the hub of the system. The 1928 timetable calls it "Grand Central", for the Grand Central Hotel on the corner. The streetcar company's offices were located at 507 St. Germain.

3rd Street for an extension to Waite Park and the Great Northern Railway car shops. They had opened in 1891 and there was a crying need for streetcar service. Three miles of track were laid through mostly open country beginning June 9, 1892. Conflicting sources say that the Waite Park extension was opened either June 24 or June 30, 1892. If so, it was to the eastern edge of Waite Park. A January 9, 1893 newspaper says the crossing of the Great Northern tracks on the east end of Waite Park, a half mile short of the shops, had just been completed. It appears the line opened all the way to the car shops in February 1893.

At the same time the company





began service on a short branch on 7th Street from 5th Avenue S. to the state Normal School, today's St. Cloud State University. With both extensions open, three cars were assigned to run from the Mississippi River dam to Waite Park every 30 minutes. One car shuttled every 30 minutes between the Normal School and the carbarn, creating a 15-minute frequency on 5th Ave. S.

The Normal School branch lasted only 16 months. According to the newspaper almost no one rode it. The service was discontinued except on commencement day. At the same time, demand had developed for an extension in Waite Park beyond the GN car shops. The streetcar company agreed to make the extension if the people of Waite Park would pay for the labor to remove the Normal School branch and re-use the track materials. That's what happened and the Waite Park extension opened in 1894.

In late 1892 the St. Cloud & Sauk Rapids Railway began running as an isolated line from Sauk Rapids to the east end of the St. Germain Street wagon bridge over the Mississippi River, which couldn't handle streetcars. A separate carhouse was built on the east side of the Mississippi River on Wilson Avenue at 3rd Street NE. Cars left either end of the line every half-hour. Passengers had to walk across the bridge until June 6, 1894, when structural modifications were



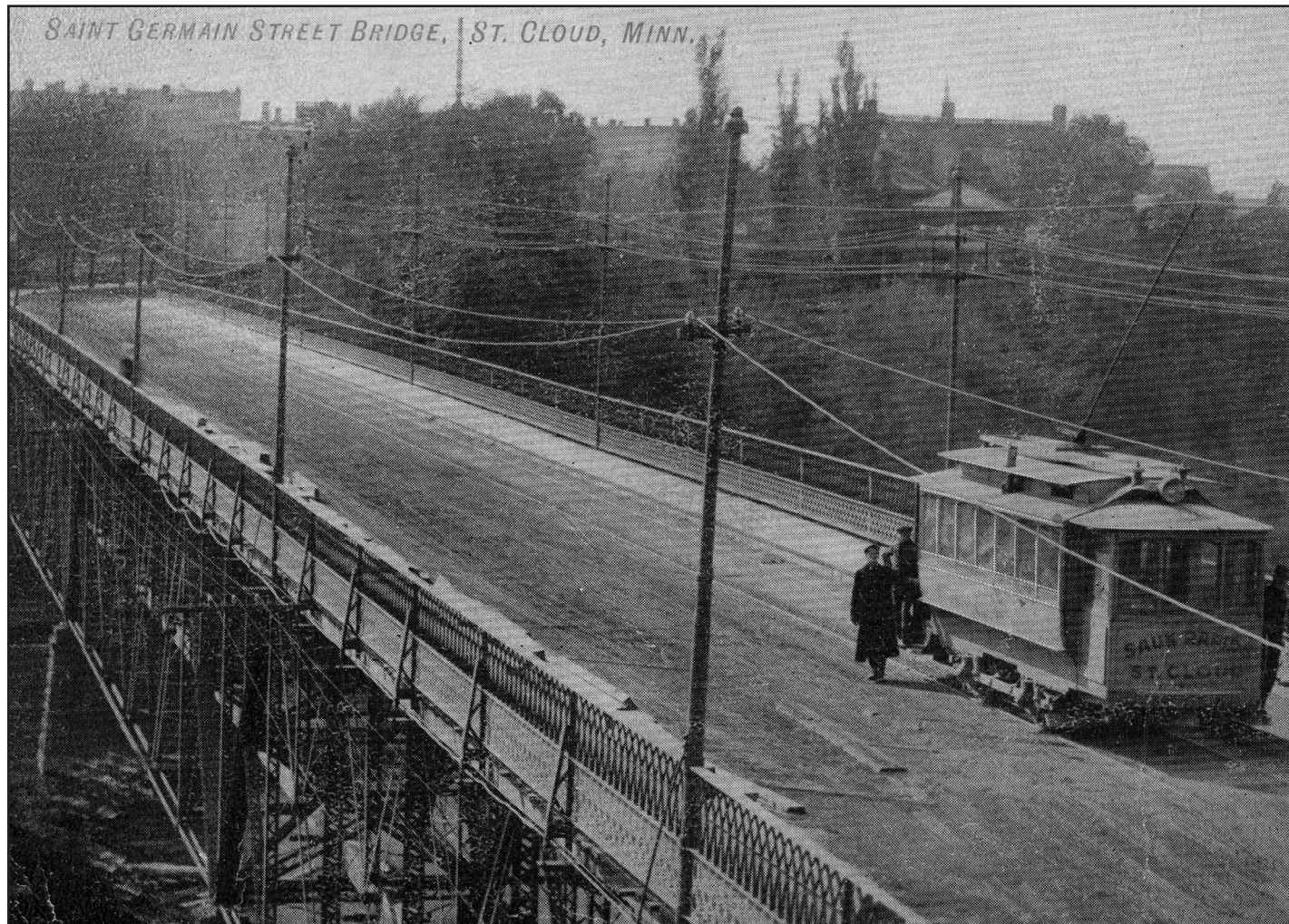
Top: Looking south on 5th Avenue from St. Germain. Note the Grand Central Hotel at left.

Bottom: 5th Avenue at 7th Street. For just over a year in the 1890s a branch turned left here to reach the State Normal School. Few rode it, so the rails were pulled up and used for the second Waite Park extension.



A couple blocks east of 5th Avenue St. Germain crossed the Mississippi River. The Sauk Rapids line opened in 1892, but the bridge wasn't strengthened for streetcars until 1894.





completed and through service began into downtown St. Cloud.

Three lines were operated during 1894:

- (1) The dam to Waite Park,
- (2) 5th Ave. So. and 11th St. to the Great Northern Ry. station
- (3) Downtown to Sauk Rapids.

From 1895 until 1905 the companies were in financial trouble and went through a series of ownership changes. It's unclear when they came under common ownership. In June 1895 St. Paul Title, Insurance and Trust

Company began proceedings for the appointment of a receiver because of default on \$125,000 in bonds. The company temporarily went into the hands of E. E. Clark until a reorganization was effected. It was reported on June 22, 1895, that the St. Cloud Street Car Company was sold by the sheriff to C. N. Harkins of Minneapolis to satisfy a personal property tax judgement. In May, 1896, it was reported as still being in receivership.

The Benton Power & Traction Co. (Sauk Rapids is in Benton County) was incorporated in September 1897, headed by C. M. Hertig and subsequently acquired the street railway system. This company opened a new commercial electric generating plant located on 5th Ave. N. on November 7, 1900.

In February 1898 the Sauk Rapids Sentinel reported that the St. Cloud and Sauk Rapids streetcar line was sold at a foreclosure sale to Jared Howe of St. Paul and that Howard Abbott of Minneapolis sold the property of the St. Cloud Power and Light Company to a group from Baltimore. E.E. Clark was chosen to manage the Watab Power and Light Company. He was also manager of the streetcar company, which he had been since being named receiver. In those early years of electrification, it was common for power companies to have direct involvement with street railways. In March, 1898 it was reported that the operator of the streetcar between Sauk Rapids and St. Cloud would be P. C. Baxter.

On December 12, 1898, the original carhouse on 3rd Street was destroyed by fire together with four passenger cars, a snow dozer and all extra motors and machinery of the company valued at \$15,000.00 but insured for only \$7,000.00. The company now had only three cars left; one that had been

parked outside and two (one an open car) in the 3rd Avenue NE barn on the east side of St. Cloud. Instead of rebuilding on the same site, a new car-house was constructed on 5th Avenue S. at Ramsey Place, just south of downtown.

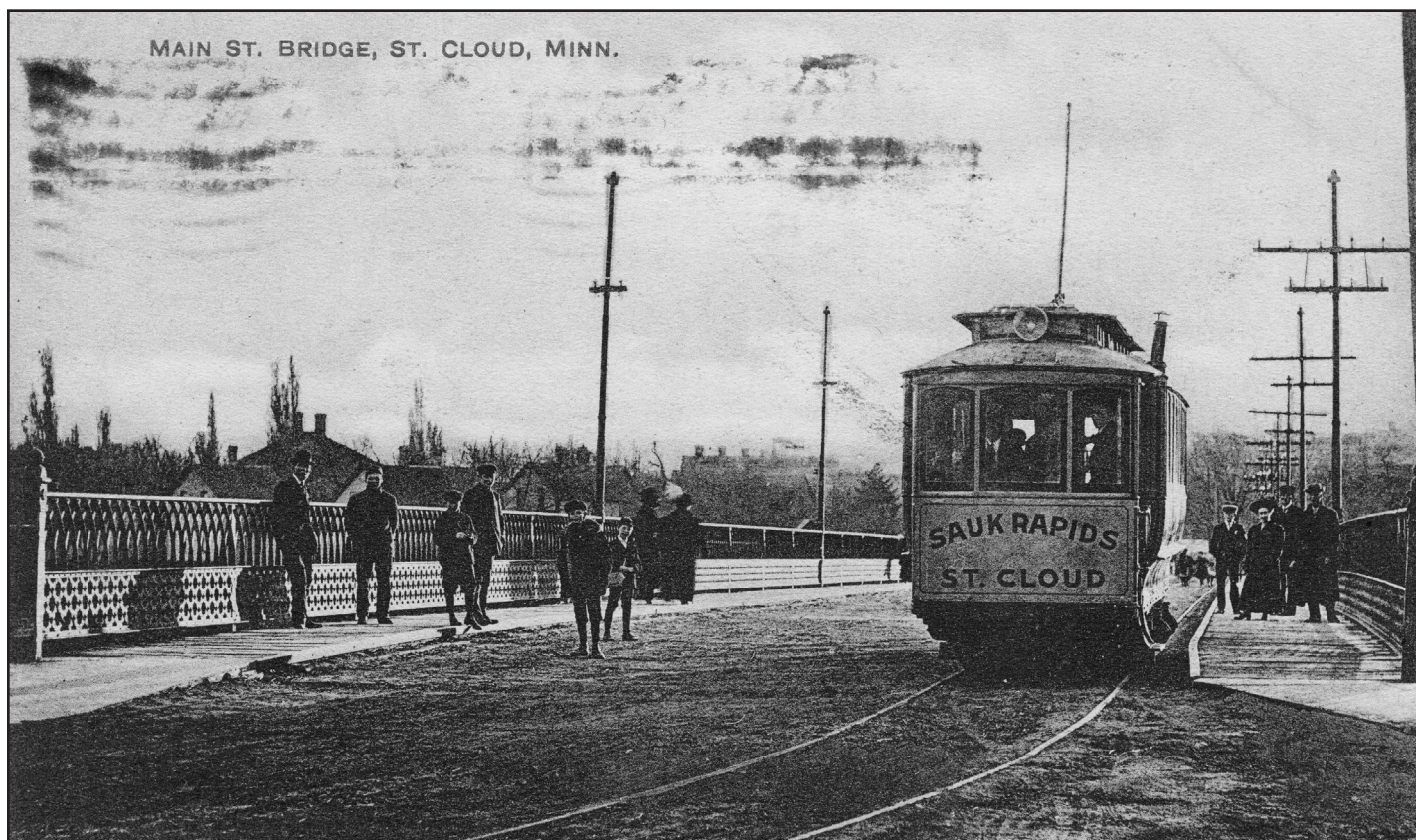
In 1899 the Great Northern opened a new stone depot in the middle of the wye where its original mainline met the newer line from Minneapolis via Monticello. That is likely when the short spur to the old depot was removed. A new two-block spur was built on 16th Avenue from 3rd Street to 5th Street to reach the new depot. A 1919 schedule shows that streetcars only used the depot spur seven times per day when trains were scheduled to arrive and depart.

On the 21st of December 1899 it was reported that all week the streetcars were pulled with horses as the Water Power and Light Company had been unable to furnish the streetcars with power. Soon thereafter the Benton Power and Traction Company completed a new power plant.

Still all was not well. At the end of a few months Mr. Hertig's Benton Power and Traction Company was in the hands of a third receiver, A.G. Whitney. In 1904 he came into possession of the line as well as the electric plant and continued to operate the line through the receivership until December 27, 1905, when it was reorganized as the Granite City Railway Company. Company offices were located at 507 St. Germain Street, next to the system's main transfer point.

In May 1900 a streetcar broadsided and killed a cow that wandered across the 3rd Street track at 10th Avenue N.

On the 17th of January 1910 at about 11:30 P.M. the Sauk Rapids streetcar was struck and demolished by a Great Northern train. Only the motorman was injured as no passengers were on



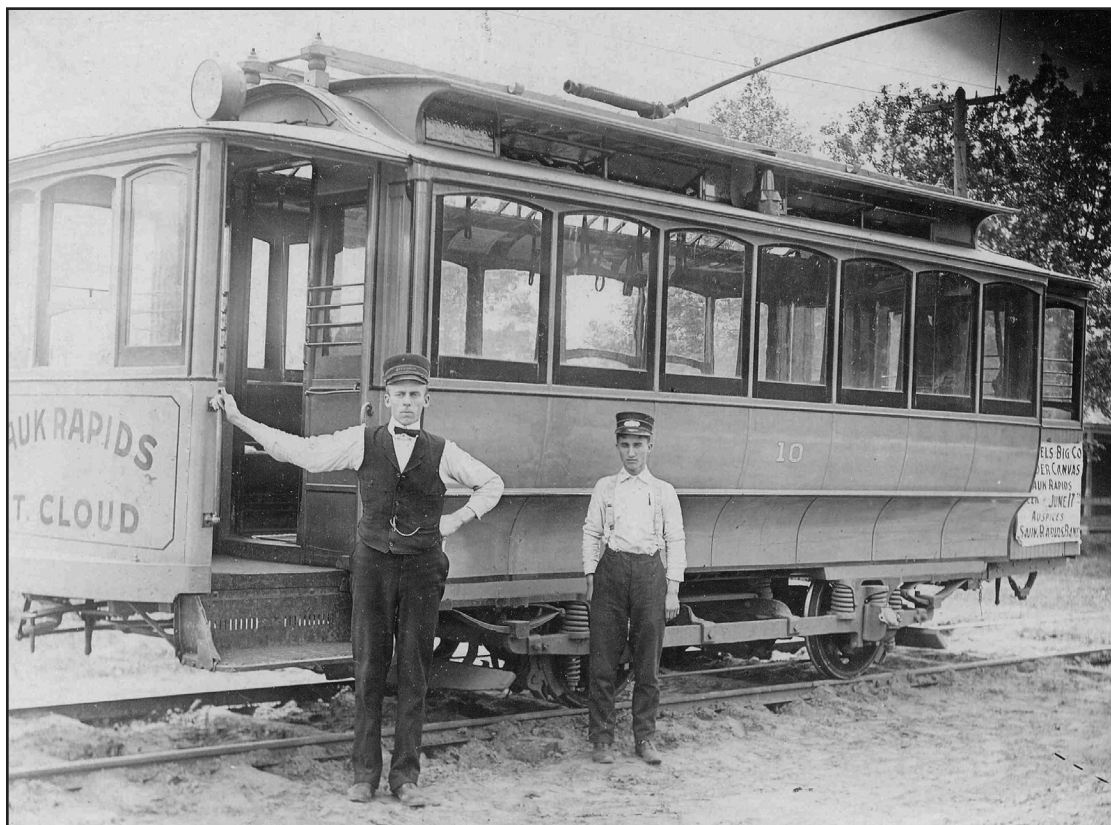
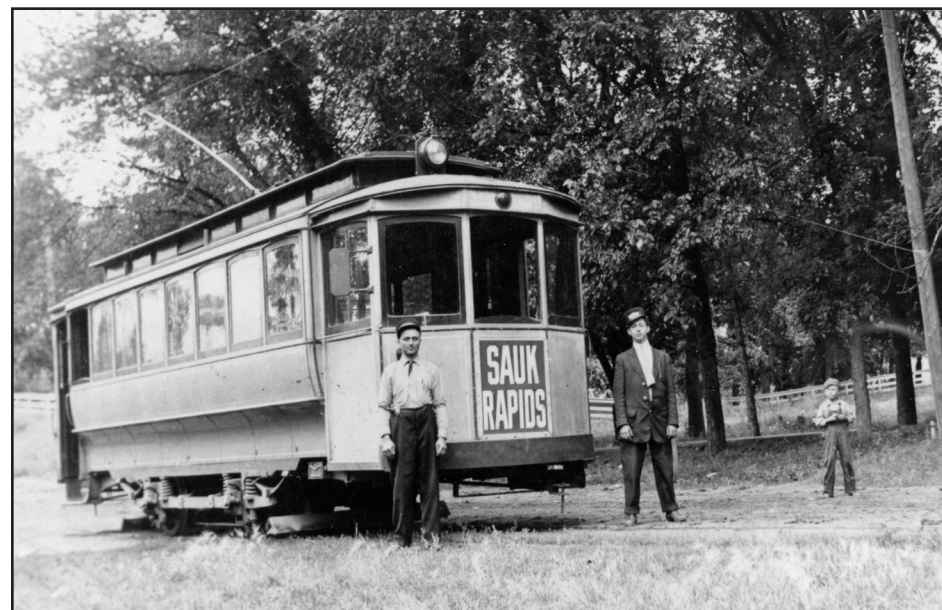
Above: A Sauk Rapids car attains the east bank of the Mississippi.
Right: Following the line to Sauk Rapids, a sister to our car 78 crosses the Northern Pacific main line on 2nd Avenue.

the streetcar after bringing some 50 Sauk Rapids passengers home from St. Cloud.

Proposed interurbans

The decade 1905-1915 was the middle of the craze to build electric interurbans between cities. Three were proposed to connect Minneapolis with St. Cloud. All would have built to the edge of town, then used Granite City Railway tracks to reach the downtown. In 1910 the Minneapolis





Scenes in Sauk Rapids: Above left: Grand Avenue is now 2nd Avenue. Benton County Historical Society collection. Above right: The end of the line at Eliza Street, now 8th Street N. There was no doubt the streetcar went to Sauk Rapids.

Northern proposed to build up the east side of the Mississippi valley to Little Falls. In 1913 the Minneapolis & Central Minnesota proposed to build up the west side of the Mississippi via Monticello. That same year the similarly-named Minneapolis & Minnesota Central published a detailed map of how it would connect St. Cloud with the Granite District southwest of town. It also made a vague promise to extend beyond that to Minneapolis. None of these schemes ever materialized.

The St. Cloud Public Service Co. was incorporated in 1915 (A. G. Whitney, President) and on June 29 purchased the Union Power Company, Public Service Company, and Granite City Railway. Apparently the Granite City Railway retained its corporate identity; trade directories continued to use this name although equipment orders were listed in the name of St. Cloud Public Service Co. W. N. Bethel was Superintendent of Railways for St. C. P. S. Co. Power was purchased from St. Cloud Public Service.

Anticipating a track extension on St. Germain Street west of 9th Avenue, in 1916 the company installed a switch and about 50 feet of track. The extension never happened, but the stub west of 9th Avenue became the layover location for the Sauk Rapids cars. It allowed them to serve more of downtown, and got them out of the way of the 5th Avenue-Waite Park cars.



Now we're headed west from downtown to Waite Park. This is St. Germain Street at 6th Avenue during the St. Cloud Street Fair. Parades had to move over for streetcars.

history of Minnesota electricity. An engineering apprentice to Thomas Edison, his Consumers Power Company grew to become Northern States Power in 1916. NSP acquired the St. Cloud Public Service Co. in 1924 (it purchased the Fargo-Moorhead streetcars in 1911) and operated the street railway system until its abandonment. The logo on the side of the streetcars said "H. M. Byllesby Company", a separate corporation within Byllesby's national utility empire, which also owned streetcar companies in Colorado and California.

The most prosperous years were from 1918 through 1920. As happened everywhere, automobile competition reduced ridership through the 1920s. Streetcars began running at a deficit in 1925. A 1929 newspaper article says the streetcars carried 700,000 people in the previous year. The same article says "Most of this riding has been done in the winter time", as a "bad weather conveyance."

Serving the Waite Park car shops

In 1891 the Great Northern opened its sprawling car shop complex in Waite Park, three miles west of downtown St. Cloud. By 1917 employment reached 800 and exceeded 1000 during the 1920s. Waite Park's population was only 317 in 1900, and 406 in 1910, so employees had to commute from elsewhere. The streetcar line wasn't extended all the way to the shops until 1894, so the GN ran a shop train from St. Cloud. In John Luecke's book *The Great Northern in Minnesota*, he recounts the collision of the shop train

St. Cloud did away with conductors in 1917.

The Pan Motor Company opened its large factory and foundry in 1918. To reach the plant, a two-block spur was built off the Waite Park line on 33rd Avenue N. from 3rd Street to 5th Street. Pan built 750 automobiles before the company folded in 1922. It's

unclear if the spur continued to be used thereafter.

On the 27th of January 1921 it was reported that Mr. A. G. Whitney and the Sauk Rapids Village Council met. It was agreed to reduce the fare on the streetcars for the Great Northern shopman from Sauk Rapids to Waite Park from 17 cents to eleven cents each way,

or two dollars for 18 tickets. Cash fare would be 7 cents to St. Cloud and 7 cents to Waite Park. St. Cloud riders pay 7 cents to Waite Park and 11 cents for Sauk Rapids. The fare within Sauk Rapids was 5 cents.

Remember H. M. Byllesby, president of the horse car company back in 1891? He's a prominent figure in the



Looking east on St. Germain at 9th Avenue. The Waite Park line has turned the corner onto 9th. The track in the foreground is the stub built in anticipation of a St. Germain extension that never happened. Instead, the Sauk Rapids cars took layover on it in front of the Breen Hotel.

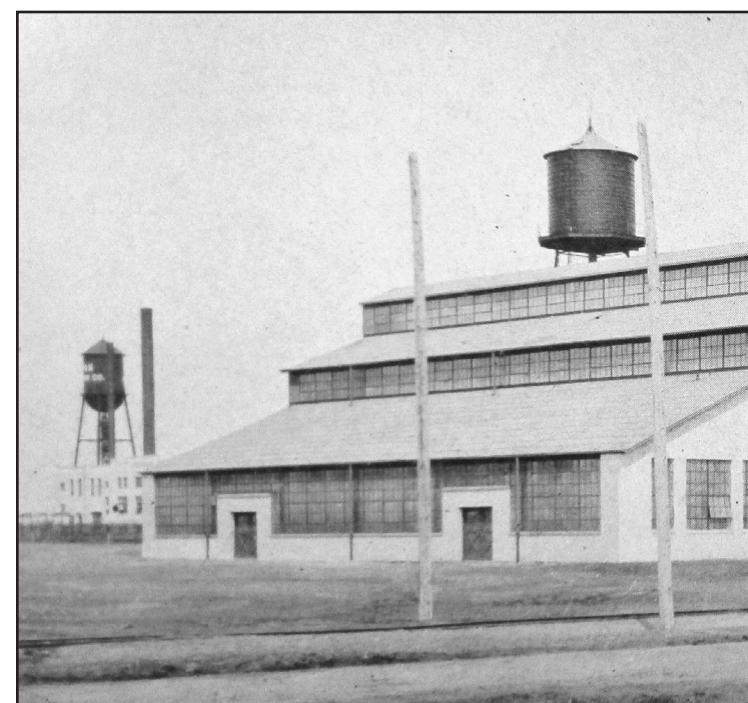
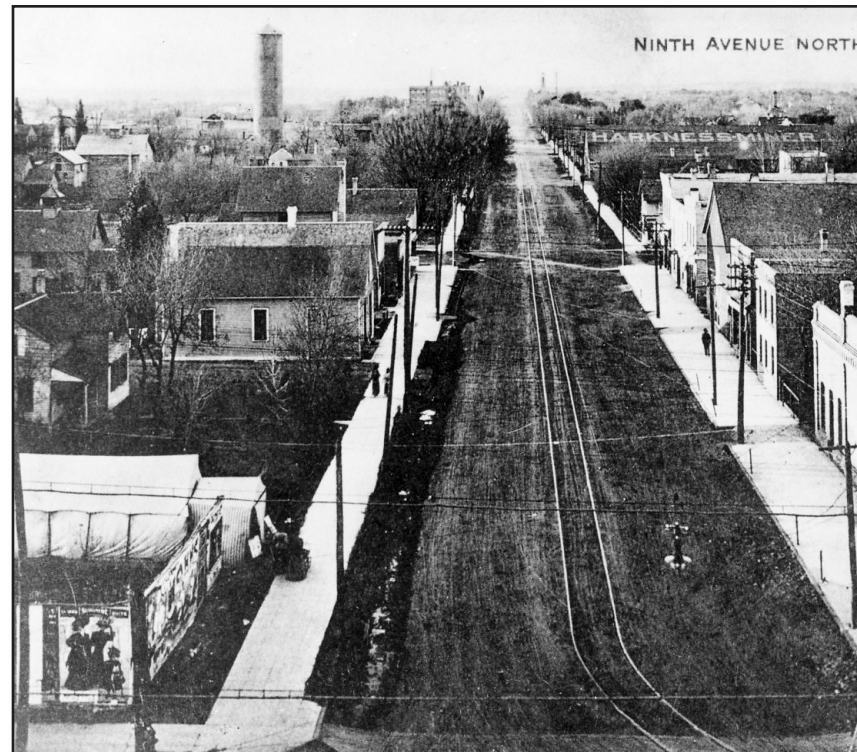


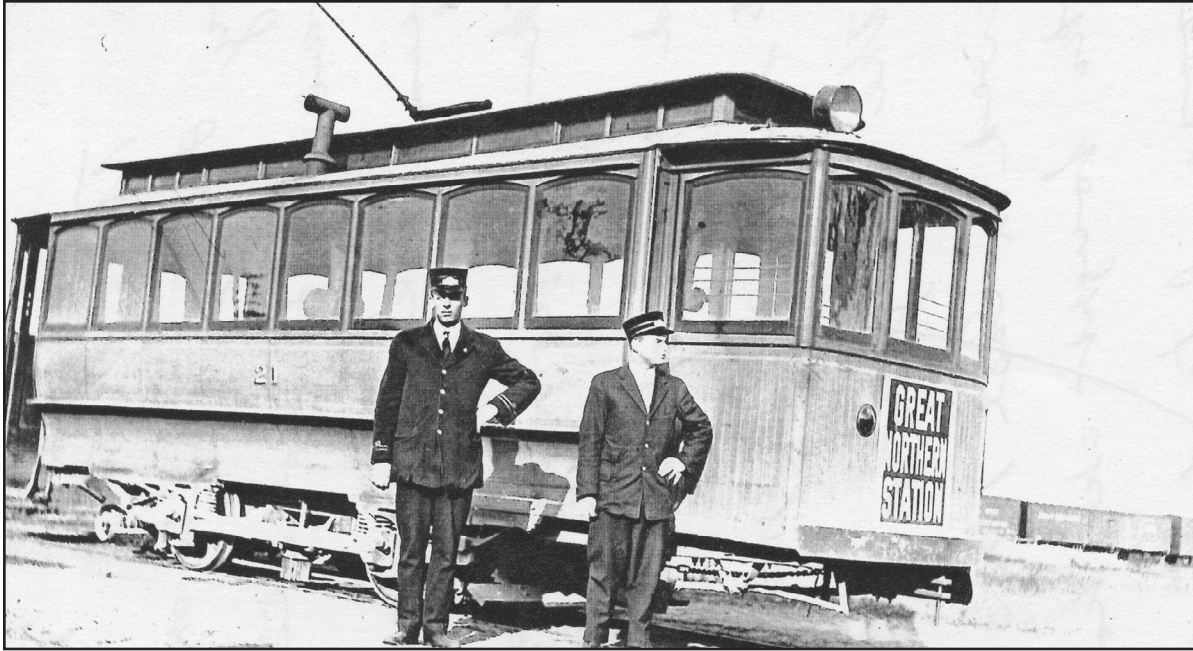
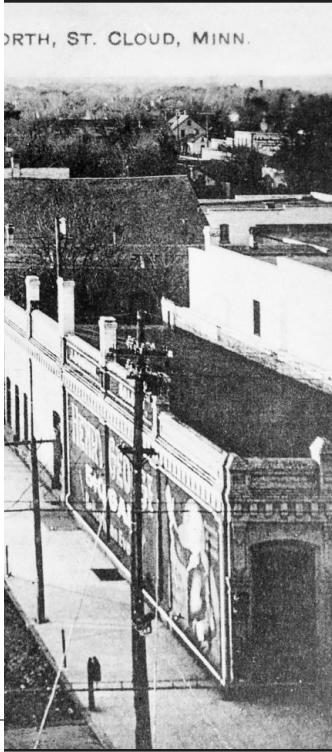
Top left: The Breen Hotel at 9th and St. Germain.

Top middle: Looking north on 9th Avenue from St. Germain.

Below left: The Pan Hotel on West 3rd Street at 33rd Avenue, near the Pan Motor plant.

Below middle: A two-block spur was built in 1918 on 33rd Avenue to the Pan Motor plant. The building is still there today.



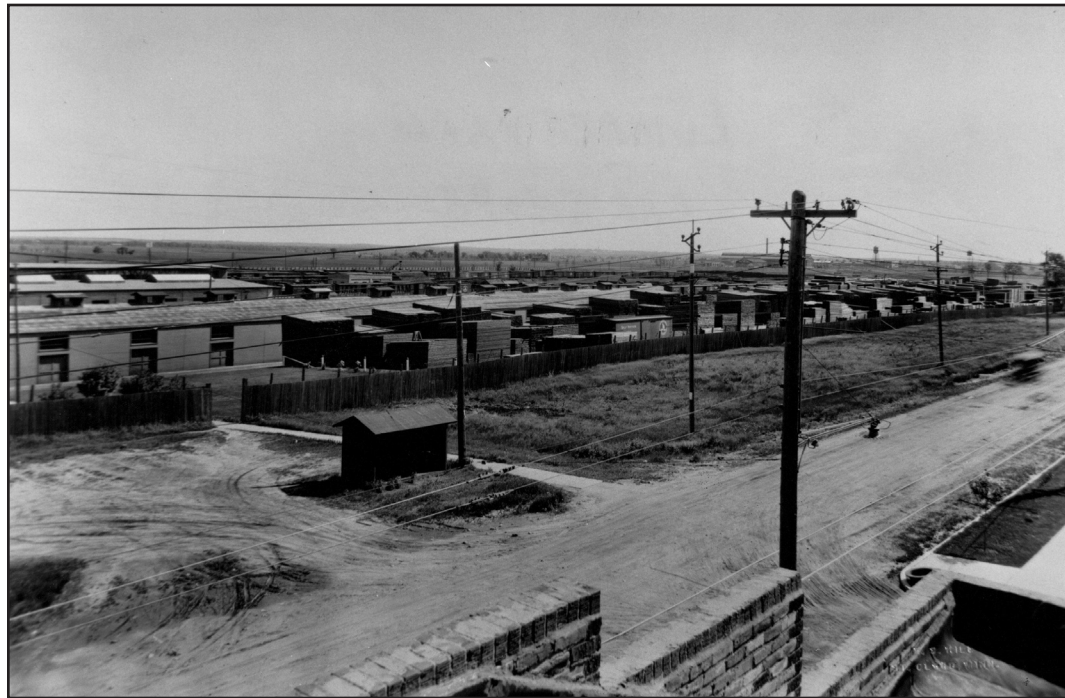
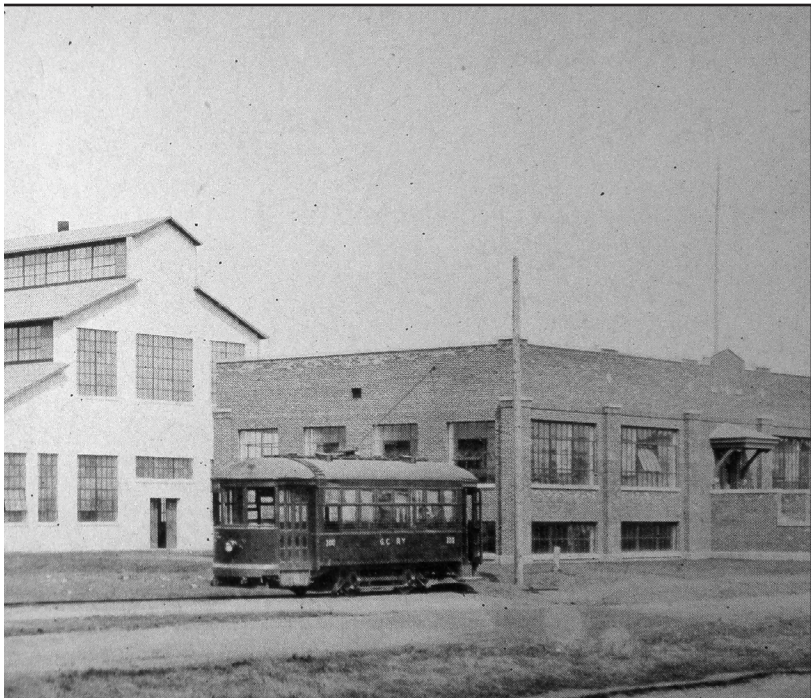


Above: A streetcar with crew poses at the end of the short 16th Avenue branch, built in 1899 to reach the new Great Northern station.
Below right: This is the east end of the Waite Park car shops. Note the waiting shelter and the streetcar tracks along the south edge of the road.

with a freight, saying there were 150 employees on board.

The six-car streetcar fleet of 1894 was completely inadequate to transport so many workers. According to the information we have available from the census and directories, it took a decade to acquire enough streetcars to put the shop train out of business.

Thereafter the twice-a-day shop move was rather extraordinary. One history says a "score" of streetcars made the move. According to the interview with former streetcar conductor Otto Machren (see page 17), each morning saw 12-15 streetcars start at the south end of the 5th Avenue line and pick up workers for the 7 AM shift start. According to Machren, he and 3-4 other boys were each assigned multiple cars. First they had to light the stove fires. Then all the cars deadhead-

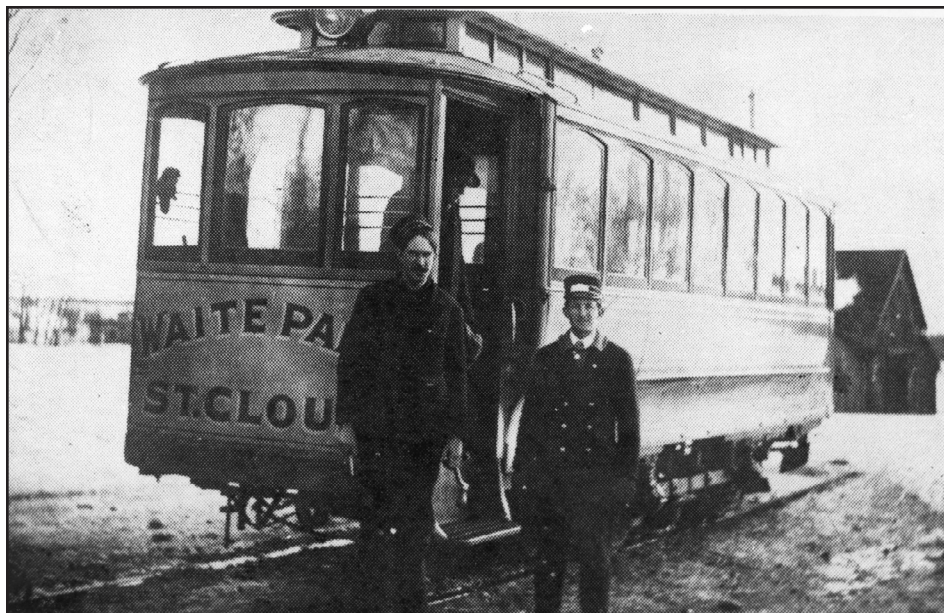




Above: The Waite Park car shops employed over 800, many of whom arrived by streetcar.
 Below: The end of the Waite Park line just short of the Sauk River. It was extended the last mile from the car shops in 1894.



The Waite Park line on 3rd Street passed through open country. In the early years the streetcar company was the only entity capable of plowing it, as these 1917 photos show.
 Opposite page: A lineup of the older streetcars at the carhouse on 5th Avenue.





ed to the south end of the line, reversed direction and began picking up passengers. Machren rode the first car and collected fares until the car was full. Presumably it ran non-stop to Waite Park from that point. Once done with fare collection on the first car, Machren boarded his second assigned car and did the same thing. Once all those fares were collected, he boarded the last car, which was hauling two trailers (probably former horse cars). He says that little train picked up passengers until about 33rd Avenue, near the west edge of St. Cloud. In his narrative, he says 3-4 other boys also had multiple assigned cars and were doing the same fare collection procedure.

A history from the Benton County Historical Society cites a 1921 Sauk

Rapids village council meeting where the fare to Waite Park for car shop workers was reduced from 17 cents to 11 cents each way. That same meeting also mandated two through cars be run to the car shops from Sauk Rapids instead of just one and that the Sauk Rapids cars be first in line for the afternoon departure, so they wouldn't be delayed by the platoon of St. Cloud cars.

In Russ Olson's book *Electric Railways of Minnesota*, the map shows a siding at the car shops. It's likely that all but one of the morning cars was left in Waite Park and the crews deadheaded back to St. Cloud on the one car. They returned in a single car in the afternoon to repeat the whole process in reverse.

The 1928 timetable on page 17 shows that the 5th Ave. S-Waite Park line ran every 30 minutes and required two streetcars. At some point the 5th Avenue line had been shortened to end at 10th Street.

In that same timetable a single car on the Sauk Rapids line made a round trip every 40 minutes, terminating in St. Cloud at 9th and St. Germain, in front of the Breen Hotel. Because of the different frequencies, transfer times between the two lines were irregularly timed, sometimes good, sometimes inconvenient. Adding a second car to the Sauk Rapids line would have made it possible to closely time all the downtown connections, but would have increased operating costs by a third, while not increasing revenue by that

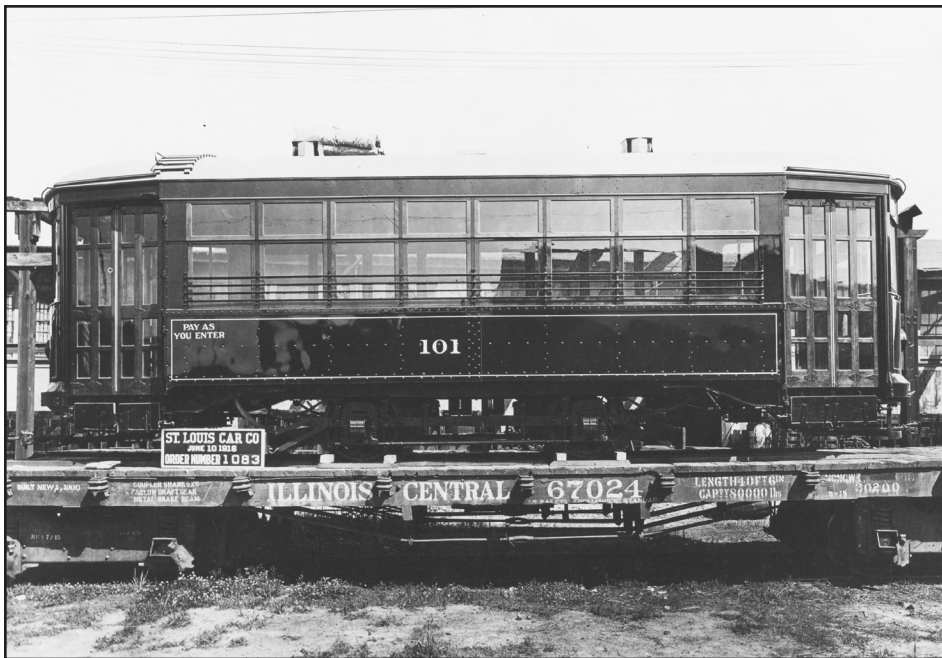
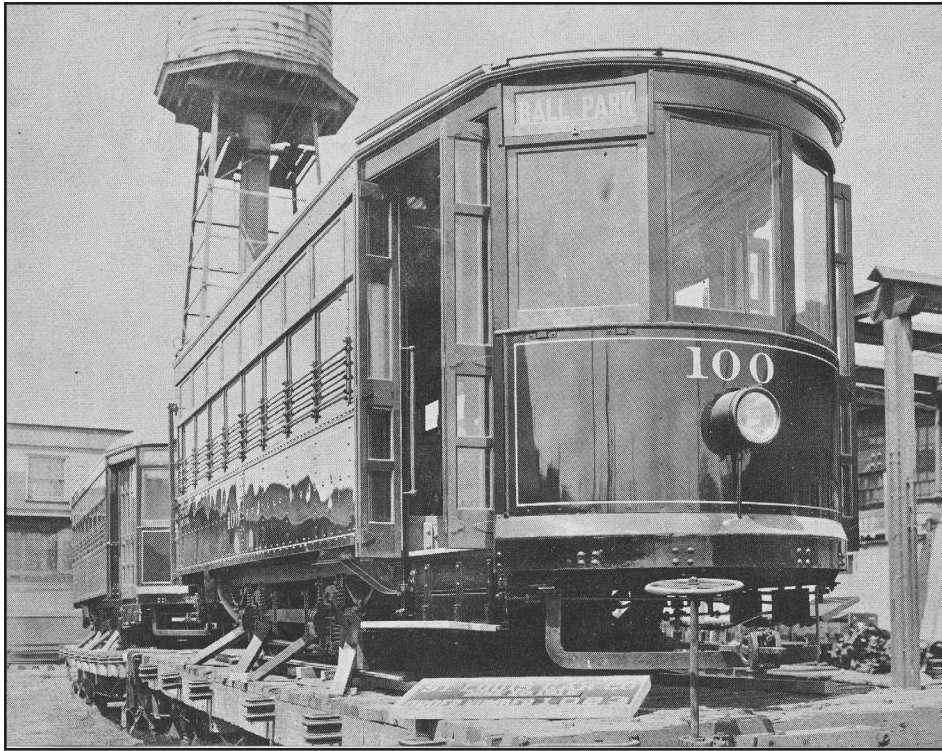
much. The Granite City Railway simply couldn't afford it.

In 1932 Waite Park citizens complained that Northern States Power was charging exorbitant rates for electricity. NSP countered by offering a lower rate if they could abandon the Waite Park streetcar line, which was running at a loss. A public vote was taken, and it was 125 to 17 in favor of continuing the streetcar service, even if it meant a higher electric rate.

The last franchise between Sauk Rapids and the operators of the streetcar company expired on January 30, 1933. On January 20, 1933 it was announced that because a large number of students were using the streetcar to and from the State Teachers College, service would continue until June 1933, at which time the Sauk Rapids line would be discontinued. The same announcement stated that the Waite Park Streetcar would be running once an hour instead of every 30 minutes.

The Sauk Rapids line was abandoned June 1, 1933. This involved the trackage from 5th Ave. S. and St. Germain Street to the end of the line in Sauk Rapids. The rest of the system continued running until April 29, 1936. Four cars remained in service the last few years of operation.

The very last streetcar operation took place Wednesday, April 29, 1936, when Birney car #202 made the last run from Waite Park, pulling into the carhouse at 11:15am. Streetcar service ended the next day with a last run at 6:00am on car 202 out to Waite Park and back. Following a parade later in the morning, the officials of the street railway company turned over their rights to the mayor and the officials of the new bus system.



In 1916 cars 100 and 101 were delivered by the St. Louis Car Company. Note the similarities to our Winona #10, by the same builder two years earlier.

Equipment

Over the years the St. Cloud roster included a mix of used and new street-cars. Service began in 1892 with four new cars from the short-lived Northern Car Company in

Robbinsdale. Although 4-6 cars were required to run the base service, quite a few more were acquired to handle the big twice-daily Waite Park car shop commute, as well as other special events. Listed here are the equipment acquisitions we know:

SAUK RAPIDS LINE	
LEAVE	LEAVE
Grand Central	Sauk Rapids
6:10 A. M.	6:35 A. M.
6:25	7:00
Breen Hotel	
7:00	7:25
7:50	8:10
8:30	8:50
9:10	9:30
9:50	10:10
10:30	10:50
11:10	11:30
11:50	12:10 P. M.
12:30 P. M.	12:50
1:10	1:30
1:50	2:10
2:30	2:50
3:10	3:30
3:50	4:10
4:30	4:50
5:10	5:30
5:50	6:10
6:30	6:50
7:10	7:30
7:50	8:10
8:30	8:50
9:10	9:30
9:50	10:10
10:30	10:50

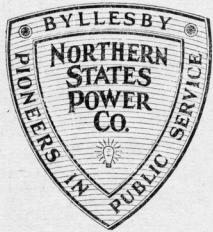
Suggestions and Complaints Will Receive Prompt and Courteous Attention

**NORTHERN STATES POWER COMPANY
ELECTRIC RAILWAY**

TIME SCHEDULE

APRIL 1, 1928

Subject to Change Without Notice
W. N. BETHEL, Supt.



**Please Have Exact Fare Ready
It Saves Time.**

WAITE PARK LINE	
LEAVE GOING WEST	
10th Street South	Grand Central
6:03 A. M.	6:10 A. M.
6:23	6:30
7:15	7:21
7:45	7:51
8:15	8:21
8:45	8:51
9:15	9:21
9:45	9:51
10:15	10:21
10:45	10:51
11:15	11:21
11:45	11:51
12:15 P. M.	12:21 P. M.
12:45	12:51
1:15	1:21
1:45	1:51
2:15	2:21
2:45	2:51
3:15	3:21
3:45	3:51
4:15	4:21
4:45	4:51
5:15	5:21
5:45	5:51
6:15	6:21
6:45	6:51
7:15	7:21
7:45	7:51
8:15	8:21
8:45	8:51
9:15	9:21
9:45	9:51
10:15	10:21
10:45	10:51

**Safety First.
Be Careful. Help Us to Avoid
Accidents**

WAITE PARK LINE	
LEAVE GOING EAST	
Waite Park	Grand Central
6:35 A. M.	6:57 A. M.
6:55	7:25
7:45	8:07
8:15	8:37
8:45	9:07
9:15	9:37
9:45	10:07
10:15	10:37
10:45	11:07
11:15	11:37
11:45	12:07 P. M.
12:15 P. M.	12:37
12:45	1:07
1:15	1:37
1:45	2:07
2:15	2:37
2:45	3:07
3:15	3:37
3:45	4:07
4:15	4:37
4:45	5:07
5:15	5:37
5:45	6:07
6:15	6:37
6:45	7:07
7:15	7:37
7:45	8:07
8:15	8:37
8:45	9:07
9:15	9:37
9:45	10:07
10:15	10:37
10:45	11:07
11:15	11:37

**Street Cars Cannot
Dodge**

1903: Duluth Street Railway 33 and 36 (LaClede Car Co. 1891), DSR 105, 108 and 109 (Pullman 1890). The latter trio were built for the Superior Rapid Transit Company with narrow gauge trucks.

1907: Twin City Rapid Transit 570, 577, 579 and 581 (Jones Car Company 1888). All had been built as horse cars, converted to electricity and lengthened to 22 feet.

1910: Duluth Street Railway 69, 71, 76 and 77 (LaClede 1893). These are identical to our streetcar 78.

1911-12: International Railways, Buffalo, NY 469, 480, 483, 484 (Brill 1896).

1916: New cars 100 and 101 (St. Louis Car Company). These cars ush-

ered in the shift to one-man operation, eliminating conductors.

1919: New Birney cars 201 and 202 (American Car Company).

Industry directories give us the following information.

Year	Track miles	Streetcars
1902	8	
1907	8.7	17
1918	9.5	20
1923	8.4	19
1926	8.2	10
1927	8.0	9
1928	7.8	10
1929	7.7	8
1930-34	7.7	9
1935	4.9	4

Oral history

In 1978 the Stearns County Historical Society interviewed Otto Machren, who as a high school student had worked as a part-time streetcar conductor.

Otto: I was sixteen years old then and I could work legally. I worked for the Granite City Railroad Streetcar Company. I was a conductor. Collected the fares and turned the trolley around.

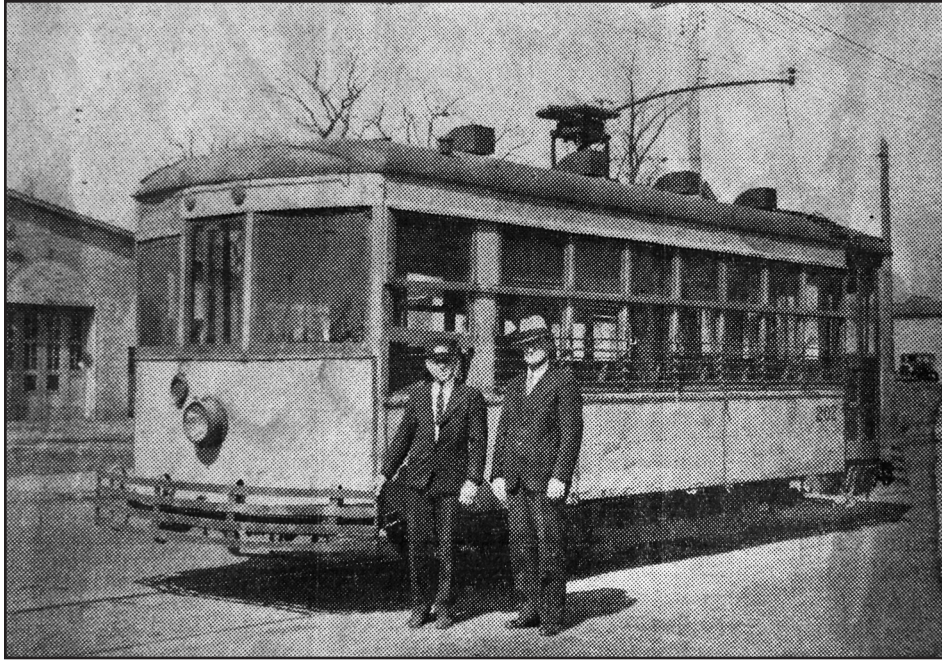
Interviewer: What years did you work for the streetcar company?

O: About 1912/13, '14. Yeah, while I went to school. Early in the morning.

I'd get up at five o'clock in the morning and we had the car garage right here where Coborn's Grocery is now. That's where the cars were stored and they didn't have electric heaters in the cars those days, so the conductor had to go in the morning, start the fires, the wood fires in those cars, hauling the car shop men out to the Waite Park Great Northern shops.

I: Did you have one particular run that you took every morning?

O: Yes, like that car shop run before school and then in the evening after school. Then I worked as extras like I could work a Saturday or a Sunday or somebody wanted to have a day off and we got twenty-five cents an hour



Birney #202 in front of the carbarn on the last day of service. Posed with the car are longtime motorman Andy Fowler and superintendent John Bohte.

when we worked as an extra. I think we got fifteen dollars a month for this regular job, but then if you did extra work and then special days like a circus day, when they'd have extra cars. Well then, "Otto, can you work today?" You could make two dollars and a half or three dollars, if you put in twelve hours. It was a big day if you could make three dollars.

I: Could you tell me the routine you had working on the streetcars from the time you got up in the morning to the time you quit at night?

O: About five o'clock in the morning to get these fires going in the cars. I had to start five fires in five different cars, which were my cars which I had to collect the fares on from here out to the car shops. There were other boys the same as me. We must have run maybe twelve or fifteen cars out there,

so there must have been about three other boys that would do the same thing. We were so busy lighting fires in the morning, we didn't have any time to visit, because these men had to be to work at seven o'clock in the morning. One car would start from the beginning of the line which was down on 5th Avenue. We would have to go with one car down there and they'd pick up from there on up here. Then when that car was filled, I'd move to the next one and collect the fares on that one until it was filled and then I had one car that carried two trailers that finished the run.

I: So you would be jumping from car to car?

O: I'd get off the car when I was through collecting the fares, pick up the next one and collect the fares on that one and then when I got about as

far as 12th or 13th Avenue North here on 3rd Street, I would take the last run, which was the one car and two trailers and we'd be picking up all the way from there on out to about the last pickup would be on 33rd Avenue and collect those fares.

I: How much did you charge to run this?

O: Five cents. The fare was five cents, but they could buy tickets. I think they got twenty-five for a dollar. A book of tickets and so in that case their fare would be.

I: You saved quite a bit of money that way.

O: That'd be four cents you see then. It cost 'em four cents each when they bought a book, but if they paid in cash, it was a nickel.

I: Did you ever have problems with people trying to ride the streetcar free?

O: Oh yes!

I: How did you handle that?

O: The biggest problem that we would have when they would buy these tickets, they were like a little theatre ticket nowadays and then they'd work on 'em and split that in two. You could work on that if you tried and then roll it up real tight and you knew when some fella handed you one of those rolled up as smaller than a lead pencil, you better unroll that and see if that's a full ticket or a half a one.

The one other trick that they used to like to do was give you a twenty dollar bill and you didn't have much time to make change, but I tried usually to have change enough in one particular spot, in my one pocket with nineteen dollars and ninety-five cents that I could grab in there and hand it to 'em and take his twenty dollar bill and go to the next one collect the next fare.

I: I suppose they didn't like that when you did that too much.

O: Well, when you did it once or twice... when you catch 'em that way,

or maybe give 'em a handful of nickels, which they didn't like.

I: Nineteen dollars worth of nickels?

O: Well, not that many, but maybe a dollar's worth. Then it broke 'em of the habit when you did that. When they'd see they couldn't work it on you, but they was like today, always somebody out trying to skinflint a little bit.

I: How many hours did you work a day?

O: I would say I worked about four hours a day, two in the morning and two in the evening and then unless I had a special, like circus days or 4th of July when there was a big program at the fairgrounds, the Benton County Fairgrounds, we would put in a big day, maybe twelve hours.

I: Did you ever have any derailments that you remember?

O: Yes, we had derailments. It never was too serious. We didn't go that fast.

I: Was there a speed limit set on the streetcars?

O: Not that I can recall. They couldn't go that fast. I don't think they ever went over about twenty, twenty-five miles an hour.

I: Were you required to wear a uniform?

O: No, not the special and the regulars, I think they had a little while, a probation when they could work with their ordinary street clothes. We did wear a badge or I think we wore something on our cap, conductor to identify us.

The Union Depot Loop line

-Aaron Isaacs

From 1898 until 1907 TCRT ran a line that never left downtown St. Paul. The original St. Paul Union Depot was located on the river at the extreme edge of downtown. It was an inconvenient uphill walk for travelers head-



ed to most hotels, businesses and streetcar connections. To address that need, in 1898 TCRT built a loop on 3rd Street (today's Kellogg Boulevard) and Sibley Street. The corner of 3rd and Sibley was half a block from the depot's front entrance.

This track addition was served by the new Union Depot Loop line. It made a dog bone-shaped loop through downtown via Sibley, 5th Street, Robert Street, 8th Street, Wabasha Street, 5th Street, Robert Street and 3rd Street. A round trip was about one mile and probably took about 10 minutes. It seems likely that two streetcars were assigned to provide a reasonable frequency, with all layover taken at 3rd and Sibley.

In 1907 the Loop line became the downtown portion of the Hamline line, now renamed Hamline-Union Depot. Previously the Hamline line had been through-routed beyond downtown with the Jackson Street line. By eliminating duplicate mileage within downtown, TCRT saved money

and crews. At some point the north-bound route changed to Sibley, 5th Street, then Wabasha.

Construction of the present Union Depot began in 1917 and was finally completed in 1926. The headhouse portion (the multi-columned front entrance facing 4th Street) opened in 1920, connected to the old train shed and tracks by a temporary wood skyway. Now all passengers could exit to easy streetcar access on 4th Street. Service was no longer needed on the old 3rd and Sibley loop. That same year the Hamline line was paired with Stryker on the St. Paul's West Side via the Wabasha Street bridge, bypassing the depot loop.

Was the depot loop used for any regular service after 1920? According to Russ Olson, from 1919 to perhaps as late as 1930, the Stillwater cars used 5th Street, wyeed at 5th and Sibley and backed down to 4th and Sibley to lay over.

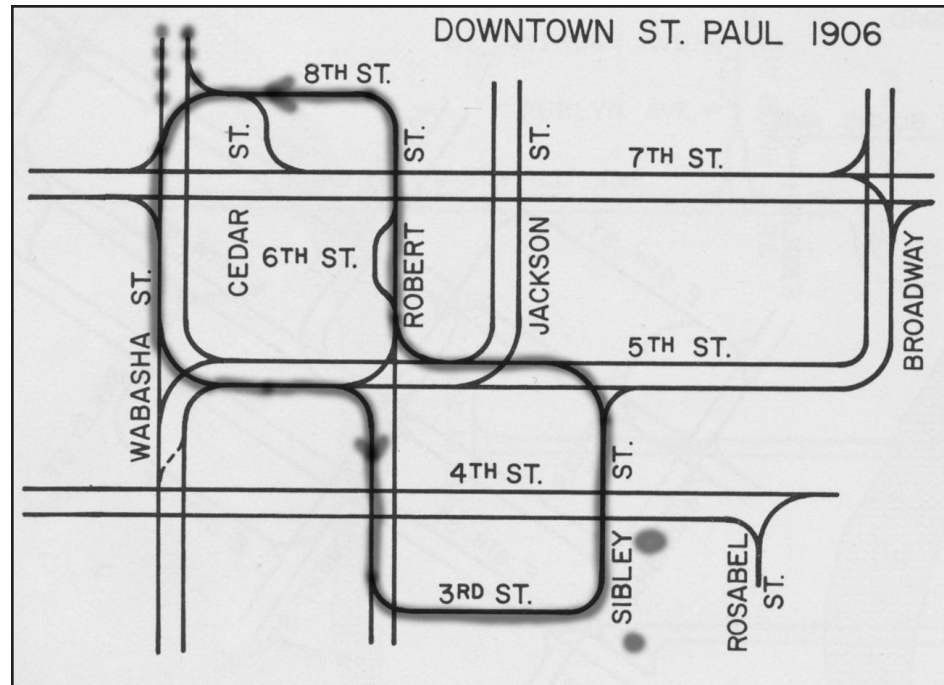
The Union Depot loop appears to

have remained intact until 1941, when 3rd Street was reconstructed, widened and renamed Kellogg Boulevard. That definitely caused the 3rd Street portion

of the loop to be removed. It's unclear how long the track lasted on Sibley Street.



Above: The old St. Paul Union Depot. Minnesota Historical Society collection. Below: Looking north on Robert Street. The Union Depot loop turns onto 3rd Street at right.





Let's take a trip around the loop. Above: Looking east on 3rd Street. The new Union Depot concourse crosses over in the distance.
Below: Looking south on Sibley Street from 4th Street toward the river.



Above: Looking west on 3rd Street from Sibley.
Below: 4th Street and Sibley after the depot opened. All Minnesota Historical Society collection.



Photo potpourri

Photos come into the museum's col-

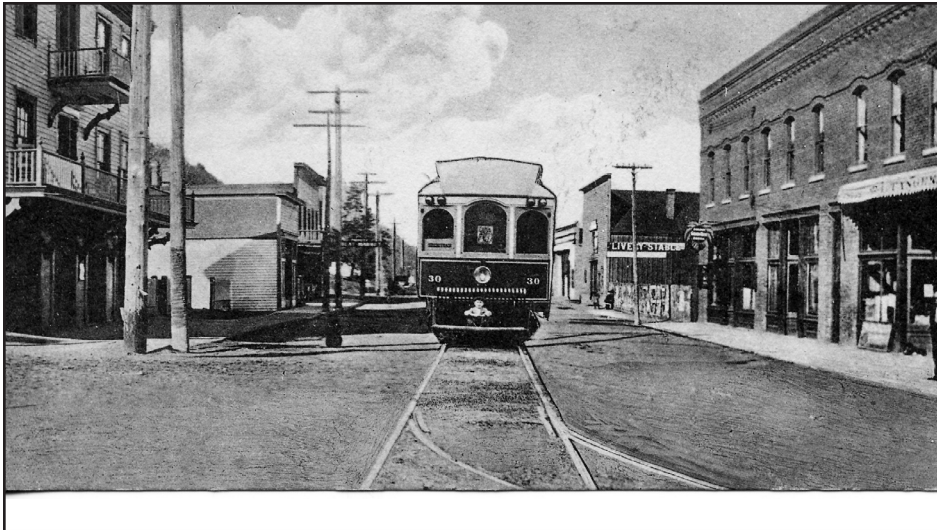
lection that are well worth publishing, but don't fit into a larger story. Enjoy.



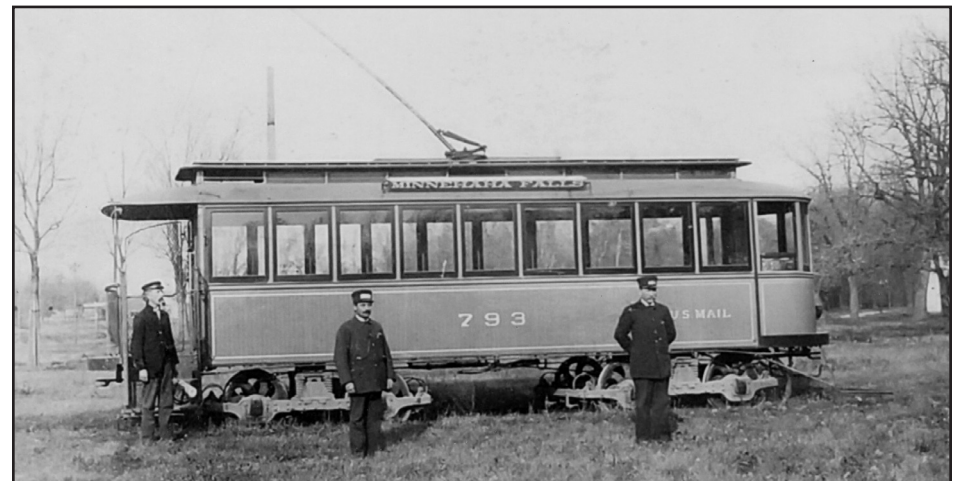
TCRT car stops were indicated by the well-known vertical signs mounted high on the overhead wire poles. However, those were not regulatory signs. If a No Parking zone was required, the city installed these. Minnesota Historical Society collection.



4th and Wabasha in the 1920s, viewed from the old St. Paul city hall.



Above left: We haven't run a fake streetcar postcard for awhile. This is Taylor's Falls, with a Sheboygan Railway, Light & Power interurban.
 Above right: A 1940s couple crosses the 5-cornered intersection of 1st Avenue N. and 7th Street as a Glenwood Avenue car approaches.
 Center right: In 1918 rebuilt TCRT streetcars arrive in Seattle
 Lower right: When TCRT purchased the St. Paul & White Bear Railroad in 1898, it acquired eight 1892 Pullman-built streetcars, which were numbered 789-796. Car 793 is working the Minnehaha Falls line, including carrying the U. S. mail.
 Below left: Well dressed students board an Inter-Campus car at the Minneapolis loop. Minnesota Historical Society collection.





Gas street lights and dirt streets were still the norm when this east-bound Como-Harriet car loaded passengers at Como and Carter in St. Anthony Park.



This newspaper photo traces the derailment path of a streetcar at 7th Street and Central Avenue, where the Monroe line diverge. Minneapolis Star-Tribune photo, Hennepin County Library collection.





A workaday winter scene on the Oak-Harriet line. There's isinglass on the windows. Note the changer with extended token barrel mounted on the dash. The farebox has one of the caps with little coin slots that must have resulted in many coins on the floor. The ads on the bulkhead are all for local companies that still exist, though not necessarily by the same name.



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